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ABSTRACT

Schools and universities in the United Kingdom are coming to accept performance appraisal as a fact of life. The first part of this paper discusses appraisal policies as "negotiated ambiguities." Ambiguous criteria concerning wording subject to misinterpretation has created reservations on the side of the National Union of Teachers. This study demonstrates how an appraisal scheme, which appears to satisfy all the criteria specified in the government's conciliation service's framework for school teachers, can operate as a ritualistic mechanism for ideological construction. The report presents a guide that outlines the process of improving performance at all levels of the hierarchy in schools. The possibility of a counterhegemonic practice in the appraisal context is also discussed. (18 references) (SI)

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ACTION-RESEARCH AND THE EMERGENCE OF TEACHER APPRAISAL IN THE UK

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THE EMERGENCE OF TEACHER APPRAISAL IN THE UK

In England and Wales teachers in schools and universities are increasingly coming to accept performance appraisal as a fact of life. The government's conciliation service (ACAS) constituted the national mechanism by which agreed frameworks were negotiated between employers (Vice-Chancellors and Principals in the case of university teachers and Local Education Authorities in the case of school teachers) and teachers' professional associations.

In an earlier paper (see Elliott 1987) I described the transformation in the political rhetoric of teacher appraisal in schools during the period between the publication of the government's White Paper on 'Teaching Quality' (1983) and the ACAS negotiated agreement (1987). The White Paper quite unambiguously proposed appraisal as a strategy of hierarchical surveillance and control over the work of teachers, fulfilling such management functions as discovering grounds for dismissal, providing a rationale for redeployment and merit pay, and identifying training needs.

The response from teachers was a hostile one. Much of the resulting controversy centred around the 'legitimate purposes' of appraisal rather than the idea in itself. Teachers and their organisations emphasised classroom focused professional learning together with career development as the primary

purposes of appraisal. They also argued for the right of appraisees to exercise a high measure of control over access to, and use of, appraisal records. All of these ideas were eventually incorporated, in some shape or form, into the ACAS negotiated agreement. The later controversy over appraisal in universities proceeded along similiar lines, culminating in not dissimilar trade-offs between what one might crudely dichotomise as the cultures of 'managerialism' and 'professionalism'.

The possibility of creative conformity

The study of negotiations, over both the appraisal of school and university teachers, indicates that teachers are not entirely powerless to resist attempts to transfer control over their profssional work and careers into the hands of the managers and administrators of resources. To the extent that policy-makers feel they need to legitimate their policies to those affected by them, they have to accommodate at the level of rhetoric the professional culture of the target group. Of course, a measure of control over the rhetoric of appraisal is not the same as realising the ideas and values it signifies in practice. But it does give the targets of policy a measure of leverage over how it shapes up in practice.

In the earlier account of appraisal issues referred to above, I asserted that I was "optimistic enough about human nature to

believe that if formal appraisal is part of a broad strategy for transforming schools into systems of coercive-power it can be successfully resisted". Such optimism was based on the belief that teachers do not have infinitely plastic natures. However, I rejected the view that resistance must always manifest itself in forms of rebellion and obstructionism, and advocated a stance of 'creative conformity'. It is the rhetoric constructed in attempts to legitimate social policy through negotiated frameworks which make such a stance possible. The 'conformity' stems from adherence in practice to the policy enshrined in the rhetoric. The 'creative' aspect lies in the novel interpretations of policy which can be legitimated by the rhetoric.

Appraisal policies as 'negotiated ambiguities'

From the evidence of the English 'agreements' it would be a mistake to see appraisal policies as clear, coherent, and unambiguous guides to practice. Let's first consider a few examples from the school teachers' 'agreement':

- **The nature and purpose of appraisal.**

  "The Working Group understands appraisal not as a series of perfunctory periodic events, but as a continuous and systematic process intended to help individual teachers with their professional development and career planning, and to help ensure that the inservice training

and deployment of teachers matches the complementary needs of individual teachers and the schools".

The reference to professional development and career planning accommodates a professionally acceptable view of the purpose of appraisal whereas the reference to deployment and inservice training may accommodate a more managerial perspective. I use the term 'managerial' to signify a particular style of management, namely: one which dispossesses the workforce of the power to control their occupational performance and futures. If appraisal is to foster professional development, then it must enhance personal competence. No professional could object to this, since it suggests increased self-mastery and control over performance. Similarly the purpose of helping professionals with career planning suggests giving them more control over their 'futures'. Inasmuch as facilitating the development of professional competence and careers are legitimate functions of management, the use of appraisal as a tool which enables it to exercise these functions effectively is professionally acceptable. Rather than exercising power over the practices and careers of individuals, this kind of appraisal can professionally empower them.

'Deployment' and 'Inservice Training' can be interpreted as fostering professional and career development. But they can also be interpreted as destructive forces. 'Deployment' can signify the continuous disruption of careers, and the removal of the individual's powers of self-determination. In this

context 'inservice training' shifts its meaning. It becomes a means of reskilling individuals to occupy the job slots to which they are 'deployed' by managers, rather than a continuing process of developing individuals' capacities to do the things they want to do better.

- **Who appraises whom? A teacher's immediate supervisor who may be the Headteacher, or other experienced teacher designated by the Headteacher.**

This principle is also high in ambiguity. It endorses both professional peer appraisal and hierarchical appraisal. It does the former by highlighting the importance of professional experience and thereby rules out non-teachers or beginning teachers. (Indeed, it also rules out student and parent appraisal). However, the peer appraisal is hierarchised although the appointment of an "experienced teacher designated by the Head" offers the option of minimising the hierarchical relation between appraiser and appraisee. A truly peer appraisal would surely be one in which the selection of appraisers was controlled by the staff group as a whole and not hierarchically.

- **"the appraisal proceess needs to be of a continuous nature. Appraisal must not become a bureaucratic chore or a casual paper exercise. Against that background we think that the**

frequency of formal appraisals culminating in written reports should vary according to the stage of the teacher's career."

Again the principle is somewhat ambiguous. Having defined appraisal as an ongoing and non-bureaucratic professional development process, an element of periodic formal appraisal, culminating in the production of written records, is then inserted.

- **The elements in the appraisal process are self-appraisal, review discussion with appraiser, observation by appraiser, the appraisal interview, appeals against appraisers' judgements, reporting to headteacher.**

Although there is a tendency to place these elements in a mechanical sequence, the agreement accepts that "after the introductory phase, many of the items may be run together". In other words, self-appraisal may be integrated into other elements such as a review of progress, observation, and the appraisal interview. Rather than proceed according to an ordered mechanical sequence, some of the items may operate as continuously interacting dimensions of a dynamic process.

What the ambiguous criteria described above do is to permit a degree of latitude over how the appraisal process is to be interpreted in practice while at the same time accommodating both a professional and a managerial view of its management

functions. The options with respect to interpretation appear to be about the emphasis placed on one perspective rather than the other.

In commenting on the ACAS document the National Union of Teachers (one of its signatories) argued that it "was capable of varying interpretation" and therefore the use of the word 'agreement' was not strictly accurate. Indeed the union stated reservations about wording which could be interpreted ambiguously, and claimed they were shared by all the teachers' organisations represented on the ACAS Working Party. The reservations were as follows:

1. The reference to the "deployment of teachers" was capable of "misinterpretation and subsequent misuse". The union argued that whereas in one sense deployment constitutes an aspect of "successful and acceptable career development...it will bring to mind the process of redeployment to take account of falling rolls..."

2. Although the 'agreement' asserts that appraisal would be quite separate from disciplinary procedures, a connection between the two was implicit in the statement that the latter "might need to draw on relevant information from the appraisal records".

3. Although the document argues that appraisal reports should be "regarded as transient, not as a final reckoning", the fact that they are available "to officers authorised by the CEO (Chief Education Officer)" implies the possibility of unspecified but wide access to them.

The union argued that records should be confidential to appraiser and appraisee, have an agreed life, and have access to them controlled by the appraisee. For the purposes of school-based management decisions "an <u>appropriate separate extract</u>" should be made available to the Headteacher.

4. The reference concerning the application of appraisal results to the LEA management of the teaching force" is ambiguous. If this refers to better-informed arrangements for inservice-training, it is highly acceptable. However, teachers might be suspicious that it refers to other things; eg forcible redeployment, dismissal, etc.

What is clear is that the unions wished to eliminate ambiguities of expression which allowed managers to use appraisal as an instrument for compulsory redeployment and/or dismissal. The comments embrace a view of the legitimate functions of management in relation to teachers; those of enhancing and supporting their professional and career development. If the unions had succeeded in eliminating these ambiguities altogether from the document, then they would indeed have completely reversed the conception of appraisal

expressed in the government's 1983 White Paper. As it stands the ACAS document's ambiguities allowed for the possibility of establishing, at least in the context of the pilot expriments subsequently established in a few LEAs, a model of teacher appraisal in which managerialism is minimised and the management functions of appraisal subordinated to the purposes of professional and career development. Such subordination is most clearly expressed in procedural form by the NUT's view that documentation available to the Headteacher for the purpose of school-based management decisions should consist only of extracts from the full appraisal record. This appears to imply a two-tier model consisting of a first tier of self and peer appraisal and a second-tier management appraisal. The management appraisal is dependent on data gathered in the first-tier process and selected by those involved in it.

I have argued that the 'professional' and 'management' functions of appraisal can only be reconciled through the development in practice of a two-tier model. This view was developed in a paper (see Elliott 1988) which looked at the implications of the ACAS agreement about staff appraisal in universities. Although the university teachers' document is not entirely lacking in ambiguity of expression, it does appear to be more explicit about subordinating management functions to teachers' professional and career development. For example, the stated purposes of appraisal are to:

(a) help...staff to develop their careers within the institution;

(b) improve staff performance;

(c) identify changes in the organisation or operation of the institution which would enable individuals to improve their performance;

(d) identify and develop potential for promotion;

(e) improve the efficiency with which the institution is managed.

There is no reference to the ambiguous term 'deployment'. Purpose (d) refers instead to identifying and developing potential for promotion. Inasmuch as 'deployment' is implicit in this objective, it is expressed in a manner acceptable to professionals.

Purpose (c) acknowledges the ways in which organisational contexts can enable or constrain the development of individuals' practices. Thus appraisal should involve the appraisee in assessing context as well as performance, and thereby identify for managers changes to organisational/institutional arrangements which will enable staff to improve their practices. Here the management function

of organisational development is clearly subordinated to the aim of improving professional practices.

Purpose (e) is perhaps the most obviously ambiguous statement. In one sense it can simply be interpreted as subordinate to purposes (a) - (d). In another sense it can legitimate linking appraisal to compulsory redeployment, dismissal proceedings, etc.

The criteria outlined in the universities' document also suggest a primary emphasis on professional and career development. For example, the appraisal process should:

"(d) encourage staff to reflect on their own performance, and to take steps to improve it;

(e) involve an appropriate mixture of self-assessment, informal interviewing and counselling. The appraisal process should be regarded as a joint professional task shared between appraiser and appraisee, with the latter involved at all stages. The views of students and others who are affected by the performance of staff should also be taken into account;

(f) provide for an agreed record of discussion, and of follow-up action;

(g) provide for staff to record dissent on an otherwise jointly agreed appraisal record;

(h) provide for a second opinion in any serious case of disagreement between appraiser and appraisee;

(i) provide for effective follow-up action in relation to staff development needs, weaknesses in organisation, provision of resources..."

In many respects these criteria are similar to those listed in the school teachers' document. But they are even more explicit in emphasising appraisal as a reciprocal or two-way process characterised by self-reflection, dialogue, and mutual trust. They are at pains to specify procedures to overcome any 'hierarchy of credibility' between the views of appraisers and appraisees. The introduction of a 'second opinion' and 'student feed-back' can all be seen as a means to this end. Such possibilities are not specified in the school teachers' document.

When it comes to 'Institutional Arrangements' the university teachers' document gives appraisees "the right to request that an alternative appraiser be appointed" and to agree about the appointment. The document also, like the schools' document, leaves room for non-management personnel to be designated as appraisers. However, in spite of its measures for securing reciprocity in the appraisal process, the relation between appraiser and appraisee is, as in the school teachers' document, largely conceived as a hierarachical relation. Even when a manager is not the appraiser, management largely

controls selection through a power of designation. This opens the appraisal process to the risk of merely reproducing a hierarchical control over what are to count as credible judgements.

In comparing the school and university 'agreements' I would conclude that the former is rather higher in ambiguity about purposes and procedures. The latter tends to build in more explicit safeguards to counter managerial excess. However, both appear to give considerable leverage to those who wish to develop forms of appraisal which empower teachers to exercise greater control over their performance and careers, and thereby minimise managerial uses of appraisal. Nevertheless, I do not underestimate the fact that ambiguities in both documents are sufficient to give a considerable amount of leverage to those who wish to use appraisal as a system for legitimating managerial control over teachers' work and futures. The leverage lies essentially in the hierarchical relation between appraiser and appraisee, and the way this enables a consensus in judgements to be ideologically rather than rationally constructed; i.e. in a form which legitimates amd masks relations of domination between managers and the teaching force.

The ideological construction of appraisals: an example of how it can be done.

In this section I will attempt to demonstrate how an appraisal scheme, which appears to satisfy all the criteria specified in the ACAS framework for school teachers, can operate as a ritualistic mechanism for ideological construction. In doing so I shall focus on the practical guide produced by Suffolk Education Authority (1987), a Local Education Authority participating in the national pilot scheme. The guide outlines a concrete process which appears to have the exclusive aim of improving performance at all levels of the hierarchy in schools. There is no mention of using appraisal records for redeploying, dismissing, or even making decisions about who should or should not be promoted. Appraisal is also seen as a continuous, cyclical process of staff development in which the formal interview with an appraiser has been redefined as "the appraisal dialogue" and constitutes only one of its elements.

At each level of the school hierarchy individuals are appraised by their immediate superior, described in the guide as "their 'line manager'." But hierarchical control over the appraisal process is further reinforced by giving the appraiser's appraiser responsibility for monitoring the appraisee's progress six months after the formal appraisal dialogue. The role of the appraiser's appraiser is known as the appraisee's "grandparent". The point of such 'second-order' monitoring by

the 'grandparent' is stated as "a way of ensuring that help and support towards the attainment of targets has been/will be forthcoming".

Targets are referred to at some point in eleven of the 20 pages in the guide. It is a term which appears to structure each of the five "practical steps for appraisal" outlined.

At the stage of preparing for the "appraisal dialogue", the appraiser will consider the appraisee's job, performance, work related relationships, training/qualifications, past job experiences, attitude, and personal matters. A consideration of the job includes "targets set after last appraisal discussion", and any explicit standards that have been established for assessing the attainment of job-related targets. Considering the appraisee's actual performance includes:

"Targets attained or not;
Reasons for causes of non-attainment;...".

The appraisee's preparation is called "self-appraisal" and it appears to involve the same range of considerations.

One aspect of the preparation process is classroom observation, consisting of three components: planning, observation, and feed-back discussion. Appraisers are told to "make observations throughout the school year - a minimum of four

hours (including time to feed back)." In planning for observation they should, amongst other things:

> "make certain that each teacher is aware that the observation of what happens in the classroom will be related both to overall performance and any pre-established targets".

Making the teacher so aware is likely to focus his/her attention on target-attainment during the observed lessons. The guide suggests that during the feed-back discussion a "good observer" should:

> "-allow the teacher to talk;
> -check progress towards previously established targets;
> -focus on a limited number of areas (not more than three) for remedy/improvement/setting targets;
> -ensure careful recording so that commitments and suggestions to support improvements are not lost;
> -enable the teacher to diagnose his/her own performance and to suggest future needs and targets;
> -leave the teacher wanting to repeat the process".

In spite of the guidance that the feed-back session should give the appraisee opportunities to talk and evaluate their own performance, it is clear that the discourse is framed by a particular conception of how good teaching should be appraised; namely, in terms of its instrumental effectiveness in achieving

pre-specified targets. This conception is presumed to be non-problematic. The notes of guidance nowhere suggest that this view of good teaching is highly contestable. In other words the terms in which 'the discussion' is couched pre-empt the raising of certain issues about what constitutes good teaching.

Not only do the notes of guidance prescribe a feed-back session which enables progress in attaining pre-determined targets to be evaluated, but they also give the observer the role of suggesting further targets for the teacher to achieve. One function of these sessions then appears to be to keep the teachers' attention focused on targets to be achieved. This surely is also the point of asking observers to record their advice about how appraisees can improve their performance. Such advice would include targets to be aimed at and strategies for meeting them. In this way the appraiser can remind him/herself and the appraisee at some future point of the targets the latter should be aiming at.

Keeping the teacher's thinking focused on targets is also the point of keeping their number small. Having to think about many targets can result in a situation where the teacher is no longer able to focus his/her mind on any. However, focusing on only two or three targets, as recommended, encourages the teacher to regard teaching as a simple technical enterprise, rather than a conmplex practice whose specific elements need to be appraised in the light of the whole. Focusing attention

continuously on a few targets is a good recipe for ensuring that the teacher is unable to "see the wood for the trees".

My interpretation of the Suffolk principles for observers is that they specify a form of control over the way teachers reflect and talk about their performance while appearing to foster self-evaluation, dialogue, and trust. If I am correct, then the view that good teaching consists of its instrumental effectiveness in achieving pre-specified targets is an ideological construction which serves the purpose of hierarchically controlling performance.

The processs outlined above constitutes a preparation for "the appraisal dialogue" between appraiser and appraisee. The latter is described as a summative appraisal, in the sense that it culminates in a formally recorded summary of a discussion about the appraisee's performance to date and of agreements reached concerning future targets and the training and support the appraisee needs to achieve them. The notes of guidance lists and defines the criteria the appraisal dialogue should satisfy. It must be objective, honest, constructive, valid, two-way, developmental, effective, realistic, and encouraging. At a first glance few would disagree. The criteria as a whole appear to embrace a concern for both grounding judgements in factual evidence and giving positive guidance. However, 'objectivity' and 'honesty' are defined in ways which appear to rule out of the appraisal dialogue judgements which go beyond the facts of performance to focus on the personal qualities it

manifests. It is implied that such judgements are inevitably conditioned or biased by the subjective values of the appraiser. The notes of guidance provide the following definitions of objectivity and honesty:

> "Objective - by removing prejudice, subjective/ unsubstantiated comment, and personality clashes.
>
> Honest - by giving the teacher an accurate picture of where he/she stands."

I would suggest some alternative definitions of these concepts:

> Honest - by making the personal biases and prejudices which underpin one's judgements clear to the teacher.
>
> Objective - being open to critiques of one's judgements by the teacher.

Embedded in these alternative sets of definitions are two quite different accounts of the object of appraisal. The first set encourage the appraiser to focus on the technical dimension of performance; on its instrumental effectiveness or consequences. Objective judgements of instrumental effectiveness are grounded entirely in factual evidence about the extent to which a course of action brings about its intended consequences (or targets). In the context of judging instrumental effectiveness objectively, an honest appraisal

will be one in which the appraiser accurately represents the factual evidence of instrumental effectiveness, i.e. telling the appraisee where he/she stands in relation to his/her targets.

The criterial definitions of objectivity and honesty contained in the Suffolk guide presuppose that the appraisal dialogue is about the instrumental effectiveness of performance. It is in this context that one needs to locate the suggestions that the appraiser's role within the appraisal dialogue should be a positive one; constructive, effective, realistic. Since appraisals of instrumental effectiveness can be justified entirely by the facts about performance, such facts can also serve as a basis on which the appraiser can secure agreements about future courses of action. They legitimate this 'positive' role because they enable the appraiser to make 'constructive' and 'realistic' suggestions for improvements, based on evidence of "strengths and past achievements", which the appraisee can accept.

The logic underpinning the criterial definitions of the appraiser's role in the appraisal interviews is as follows. By getting appraisees to see their performance from an instrumental point of view the appraiser is able to secure their agreement to a future plan of action. In other words the adoption of such a perspective by appraisees enables appraisers to control the outcome of the appraisal dialogue, and therefore the appraisee's future performance. The dialogue proceeds in a

'rational' sequence beginning, as the Suffolk guide advocates, "with the appraisee's 'self-appraisal'" and ending "with a set of mutually agreed targets". The initial 'self-appraisal', structured in terms of attainment targets, reinforces an instrumental view of practice, and thereby establishes the strong possibility that the appraisal dialogue will culminate in a consensus.

The alternative definitions of 'objectivity' and 'honesty', which I provided, presuppose a radically different perspective on teaching and its appraisal. They presuppose a value perspective which is expressed in judgements about the qualitative, rather than purely technical, aspects of performance. The qualitative dimension of teaching is manifested within the performance itself rather than its results. It constitutes the extent to which teachers realise or fail to realise in their interactions with students those values which define their professional identities as educators, eg care and respect for students as persons, a concern to protect and foster their powers of understanding, and respect for their potential as self-actualising and self-determining beings.

This view of teaching as a moral practice does not exclude the technical dimension but places it in a broader context of educational values. Appraisals of teaching are not viewed simply as judgements of instrumental effectiveness. They involve critiques of intended targets and/or the methods

employed to achieve them, on the basis of perceived inconsistencies with the professional values and principles which constitute teaching as an educational process. Such critiques will inevitably be perceived by appraisees as threatening to some extent. They are not just critiques of performance but also of the professional 'self', or identity it manifests. Such critiques render a teacher's sense of self problematic.

This problem of identity is not necessarily resolved by an appeal to the facts. Such facts may be ambiguously interpreted because appraiser and appraisee disagree about what the professional values of teachers ought to be, or what constitutes evidence of their manifestation in practice. The appropriate context for handling such contestable appraisals is open and free dialogue in which appraiser and appraisee reflect together about their own and each other's interpretations of the facts and the evaluative perspectives embedded in them. In this context the concept of 'objectivity' and 'honesty' take on rather different meanings to the ones they possess in the context of purely technical dialogue. Moreover, such dialogue need not result in total agreement. Both appraiser and appraisee may emerge from it having modified and changed their views. Through it they may both develop their personal understanding of professional values, and what constitutes a realisation of them in practice, but still 'beg to differ' in some respects. It would be quite inappropriate for the appraiser to attempt to

secure agreement to a future plan of action. Moral dialogue about teaching, when genuine, gives the teacher the right to self-determine his/her own future practice.

Genuine moral dialogue keeps the threat experienced by moral appraisals of teaching to a level which stimulates but does not inhibit self-reflection. But it is quite inconsistent with a hierarchical relation between appraiser and appraisee. When moral appraisals are hierarchically structured the level of threat is inevitably high. The existence of the hierarchical relation symbolises the uncontestable moral authority of the appraiser.

In an earlier document (1986) Suffolk Education Authority advised that appraisal should not involve inferences about the personal qualities manifested in performance. This policy is not simply about reassuring teachers. The trade-off it secures is to reduce the threat and anxiety hierarchical appraisal arouses in teachers in exchange for getting them to accept purely instrumental conceptions of their practices.

The policy of ruling out inferences about the personal qualities of teachers constitutes a mechanism of 'ideology formation' because it focuses attention on quantifiable performance targets. According to Suffolk's practical guide, targets should "be stated in clear, unambiguous language; be few in number...; be measurable or observable". This 'target ideology' facilitates hierarchical control over the

performances of teacher. The targets are largely derived from 'the job description', and department, school, LEA policies. They are hierarchically imposed, rather than self-generated within a framework of professional values.

The alternative way of reducing the threat and anxiety of appraisal is to construe it as a form of unsequenced moral discourse between professional peers which enables each person to develop capacities (eg of reflexivity) for self-determining improvements in the quality of their teaching. The final phase of the appraisal process outlined by Suffolk is the monitoring of the appraiser's 'help and support' by the appraisee's 'grandparent'; a procedure which reinforces hierarchical control over the latter's thinking and performance.

The Suffolk appraisal process poses the danger of alienating the professional self of a teacher from his/her performance. If successful, teaching will lack 'soul' because the teacher will lose touch with him/herself. Teacher development then becomes a process of acquiring low-level technical/instrumental skills, in contrast to a process of developing the professional wisdom to realise educational values in concrete forms of action. Competence gets defined as a mastery of techniques rather than a mastery of the self in the service of the professional values it professes. The teacher becomes deprofessionalised and transformed into a

technician, thereby losing a professional identity which defined by the values of the professional culture.

Teacher appraisal of the Suffolk variety can be interpreted as an attack on the professional culture, since it isolates the individual teacher from the influence of peers by bringing his/her performance under the direct surveillance and control of a 'line manager'. In this way discourse about practice is hierarchised (???), and institutionalised opportunities for lateral communication and the sharing of experience between peers restricted. The development of a distinctive professional culture is jeopardised. Claims by teachers to have a special knowledge and understanding of the aims and processes of education get interpreted as rationalisations for 'restrictive practices' which are inconsistent with providing an efficient service to the consumers of education.

Appraisal of the kind I have described can be viewed as part of a broader political strategy to transform the cultures of social organisations which have previously provided a buffer; a social space between individuals and the state. Nicholas Boyle (1988) has argued that such autonomous or semi-autonomous organisations have protected individuals from direct state interference and given "shape and substance and continuity to their lives, a focus for loyalty and a place of engagement with other citizens that is not simply an extension of the market-place..." Boyle suggests that the most

significant of all these attacks on intermediate organisations has been our present government's assault on the professions:

> "The case of the professions is significant because it shows that Thatcherism is indeed hostile to the whole range of social institutions that are not part of the state, and not simply to those that exercise quasi-government functions. A profession is by definition a corporation that restricts its membership by other than market considerations, and professional standards are standards imposed not by the market but by the opinion of fellow-professionals. You cannot have professional standards without professional restrictive practices and an assault on restrictive practices is an assault on the professional institutions themselves."

He goes on to conclude that:

> "There is no room in the Thatcherite view for any social units larger than the individual, and the individual has his identity only as a unit of consumption or of labour, not as one who shares in the life of any institution...
>
> ...in a consumer society people's labour is expensive. This, however, does not mean that in it people themselves are of worth...Like expensive computing time, people must be used to the full when switched on and

> be either instantly transferable to another function when one job is completed or else simply switched off. In the language of Thatcherism: people - that is workers - must be flexible, or unemployed...They are in short to be dismembered, reduced to a series of functions that they exercise in accordance with no principle of continuity of their own choosing but only with the demands of the market".

One could view the Suffolk practical guide to Appraisal as a micro-political strategy for penetrating the professional culture and subordinating those elements which restrict the utility of individuals as marketable commodities. In this view it constitutes a device for reducing the individual teacher to a flexible resource in the labour market: one with an infinitely plastic and malleable nature, capable of being remoulded in whatever shape is required. Within the Suffolk scheme performance targets can be continuously redefined in the light of changing job descriptions and LEA, school, and departmental policies. Appraisal can then be used as a device for rationalising the acquisition and distribution of marketable skills. Redeployment doesn't have to be made explicit as a function of appraisal. The possibility of using appraisal in this way is implicit in the very form and structure of the process outlined in the practical guide; one which embodies the assumption that 'professional development' is the individualistic and possessive process of acquiring techniques.

Appraisal, as advocated in the Suffolk guide, is not simply a strategy which operates on the professional soul of the teacher. It is also a strategy which operates on the soul of the manager. Within an autonomous professional organisation managers are professional leaders. Their task is to regulate, orchestrate, and co-ordinate the activities of individuals so that they realise shared professional goals, values and standards. But within an overall assault on intermediate organisations by the state, managers are pressurised into detaching themselves from the professional culture to become agents of state control at the workface. Teacher appraisal schemes which construct an ideology of teaching also construct an ideology of school management which legitimates it as an agency of state control.

The Suffolk guide should not be viewed as an idiosyncratic interpretation of the criteria established in national agreements. Hewton (1988) in a 'State of Play' review of the national scene suggests that the general trend is to embrace "a 'top down' form of appraisal involving interviews conducted by a senior person - either a headteacher, deputy head or head of department." He refers to alternative approaches which have evolved organically in some schools outside the process of national policy development. They "relate to self-evaluation and peer appraisal (as distinct from line management appraisal)", but Hewton concludes that "it is unlikely these will play a major part in any widely adopted scheme." Schemes of appraisal currently being devised in some

universities' also appear to be taking a similar hierarchical shape. The use of appraisal as a management tool seems to be an immovable force.

Is a counter-hegemonic practice of appraisal possible?

Outside the context of the national pilot schemes many LEAs have, in spite of some initial and I believe misguided pressure from the teachers' unions, proceeded with the development of appraisal schemes in their schools. Some LEAs have done so with the quite explicit intention of supporting the organic development of appraisal schemes from the grass-roots. Their hope is that these can then be accommodated to any extensions of the ACAS criteria resulting from the national pilot schemes. Such LEAs are aware that the government may wish to establish standardised procedures and strategies nationally, rather than allow variation within a criterial framework which is open to ambiguous interpretations. In which case overt conflict is likely to emerge between national and some local appraisal policies. However, the hope is that only an amended criterial framework will be established.

Those LEAs fostering 'bottoms up' development can be viewed as facilitating a counter-hegemonic strategy. But it is not simply an 'oppositional' one. Rather it is an exercise in creative conformity; a strategy for securing a form of

appraisal which genuinely fosters professional development, yet at the same time appears to conform to the nationally negotiated rhetoric. Some of these 'counter-hegemonic' LEAs are now in a position to observe some of the developments they have initiated coming to fruition, and may be grateful that they were not invited to participate in the national pilots. The latter involves the implementation of schemes which tended to be bureaucratically constructed in the light of the ACAS criteria. Developments in some LEAs outside the national pilots have emerged from official support for the dissemination, comparison, and discussion amongst the teaching profession of school initiated schemes. In at least one of these LEAs a 'creative compromise' is emerging between peer and management-based appraisal. The London Borough of Enfield is evolving a two-tier model.

Earlier I suggested that something like a two-tier model was implicit in the NUT's reservations about ambiguities in the ACAS agreement. Indeed in one earlier paper (see Elliott 1988) I attempted to articulate this model in a more explicit form, using teachers' based action-research as the paradigm for the first-tier peer appraisal.

Teachers-based action research can be characterised as follows:

1. It focuses on the identification, clarification, and resolution of problems teachers face in realising their

educational values in practice. As a form of inquiry it is a practical/moral rather than theoretical/technical science.

2. It involves joint reflection on means and ends. Educational values as ends are defined by the concrete actions a teacher selects as the means of realising them. Such values are realised in a teacher's interactions with students and not as an extrinsic outcome of them. Teaching activities constitute practical interpretations of values. Therefore in reflecting about the quality of his/her teaching a teacher must reflect about the concepts of value which shape and give it form.

3. It is a reflexive practice. As a form of self-evaluation or self-appraisal, action-research is not simply a matter of the teacher evaluating his/her actions from any perspective, eg that of their technical effectiveness. It is primarily a matter of the teacher evaluating the qualities of his/her 'self' as they are manifested in their actions. From this perspective such actions are conceived as moral practices rather than mere expressions of techniques. Self-appraisal in the context of a moral practice involves a particular type of self-reflection; namely, reflexivity.

4. It integrates theory into practice. Educational theories are viewed as systems of values, ideas, and beliefs which are represented not so much in a propositional form, as in a form of practice. Such theories are developed by reflectively

improving practices. Theory development and the improvement of practice are not viewed as separate processes.

5. It involves dialogue with professional peers. Inasmuch as teachers strive through action-research to realise professional values in action, they are accountable for the outcome to their professional peers. Such accountability is expressed in the production of records which document changes in practice and the processes of deliberation/reflection through which they were brought about.

Whitehead (1989) has argued that such records tacitly imply a teacher's claim to self-understanding, i.e. to know his/her own professional development. Such a claim constitutes an invitation to peers to engage in a professional dialogue about the validity of a teacher's practical interpretations of educational values as these are evidenced in the records provided. This kind of dialogue can influence a teacher's self-understanding and stimulate new direction for practical inquiry. Self-appraisal and peer-appraisal are both integral to educational action-research.

The process I have described above is barely accommodated within the kind of management-led appraisal illustrated in the Suffolk practical guide. The peer appraisal is distorted by being individualised and hierarchised in the form of the formal appraisal interview. Accountability is exercised upwards to a line-manager rather than laterally to a

professional peer-group. I have already demonstrated how the discourse of the hierarchical formal interview is structured in a manner which rules out the kind of free and open dialogue cited in 5, and by implication the conception of teaching as a moral practice such dialogue rests on. In focusing attention on the instrumental effectiveness of actions, the discourse structure of the hierarchical interview encourages teachers to dissociate their actions from the educational values which define their identities as professionals. The appraisal interview permits reflection on the technical aspects of performance but not a reflexivity in which teachers evaluate their actions as manifestations of 'self' in the light of the educational values they profess.

Now of course it can be argued that discourse about targets can refer as much to values as to concrete objectives. Why, for example, cannot a commitment to the value of fostering co-operative learning be defined in terms of tangible targets. The answer is quite simple. To do so would be to distort and inhibit the development of a teacher's understanding of what it means to foster co-operative learning. Such an understanding can never be finally fixed. It develops and evolves through continuing reflection by a teacher about the strategies s/he adopts to foster co-operative learning in a range and variety of contexts. To operationally define strategies for fostering co-operative learning in the form of fixed targets is to pre-empt the kind of reflective process described in 3.

It is not only the peer appraisal which is distorted by the structure of discourse in the hierarchical formal appraisal inerview. The meaning of self-appraisal is distorted by focusing attention on the technical aspects of teaching, and neglecting the moral aspects. This happens not only within the interview itself. The value of the earlier self-appraisal and classroom observation phases is construed purely in instrumental terms; as a preparation for the appraisal interview rather than as a worthwhile professional development process in iteself. The result is that these phases are also individualised and hierarchised. The self-appraising teacher reflects in isolation from his/her professional peers, and in the light of a hierarchically constructed agenda of questions. The questions for self-appraisal are not self-constructed. Similarly, classroom observation is not a reciprocal arrangement between peers but a hierarchically managed procedure.

A two-tier model of appraisal, in which action-research constitutes a first-tier process, would prevent self and peer appraisal being distorted by the individualisation and hierarchization which results from their subordination to the formal appraisal interview. The first-tier would constitute a process of professional development in itself, capable of enabling individuals to identify their own learning needs and determining how these are best provided for. Indeed it would be a major task of management to facilitate and support such an action-research process at the organisational level, eg

with respect to the provision of time for reflection, peer observation, and teachers' meetings.

However, the two-tier model also acknowledges the legitimate appraisal functions of management. The latter need to monitor the extent to which the first-tier process is enabling the professional development of staff, and they need to assess the potential contribution of individuals to roles and tasks within the organisation. The records constructed by individuals, and 'validated' in dialogue with peers, during the course of the first-tier process of action-research, would constitute the data-base for a management-led appraisal of how individual potentials might be developed and used to the benefit of the institution. Such records would incorporate accounts of the validating dialogue with peers, in which areas of agreement and disagreement were documented. Within this two-tier model, the individual teacher in discussion with peers would select and organise the material for the formal appraisal interview. Access of managers to performance data would therefore be controlled by appraisees and their peers, and release of data would depend upon the confidence and trust the latter were able to establish with the former. Part of this would involve establishing agreements about the conditions governing access to the second-tier appraisal records beyond the boundaries of the institution.

The advantage of the two-tier model is that it limits the use of teacher appraisal to management functions which can easily

be legitimated to professionals in educational institutions. The formal interview can provide an opportunity for managers to engage in genuine two-way dialogue with those at 'the chalk-face' about how the organisation can both meet professional needs and support the development of demonstrated potential.

At least one LEA, the London Borough of Enfield, has been encouraging its teachers to discuss the possibility of developing this two-tier model in schools (see Boothroyd and Burbidge 1988). This is partly due to my own involvement as a consultant for Enfield on teacher appraisal. But it is also due to the fact that one of the first schools in Enfield to organically evolve its own appraisal scheme appeared to do so along two-tier lines. Boothroyd and Burbidge, two senior teachers released from their schools to stimulate reflection about appraisal in the teaching force, case studied this school, and argue that its development of a two-strand model was an example of "the removal of threat by creating ownership". They claim that:

> "The staff were concerned that the appraisal should not be done by one person, and that observation of lessons would pose a potential threat. Through consultation and staff discussion a model of peer group observation was developed."

There is some evidence that the 'bottom up' development of two-tier schemes in response to the threat of managerial models - which individualise, hierarchise, and technologise appraisal processes - is not an isolated event. Reports of such schemes, from those responsible for monitoring developments in LEAs which have opted for organic development, are on the increase. The growth of such schemes can be explained in terms of the professional culture's response to the managerial hegemony expressed in many of the national pilot schemes.

Two-tier approaches constitute, as Boothroyd and Burbidge claim, a strategy for removing threat by creating ownership. They constitute what I have termed a creative compromise between the prevailing professional culture and the growth of management in educational institutions. Such a compromise is more than a mere accommodation to elements of an invading culture, as the development of individualised, hierarchised and technologised approaches like the Suffolk scheme appear to be. The latter do indeed embrace certain features of the dominant professional culture of teachers. The incorporation of the classroom observation element, for example, reflects the priority teachers give to work in classrooms with students; their feeling that professional acknowledgements and rewards should be largely based on appraisals of such work and that inservice training resources should largely be directed to helping them function better in classrooms. But these accommodations do not prevent appraisal from being used

as a device for ideologically reconstructing the culture of teachers, so that they come to view their performance in classrooms in ways which legitimate the hegemony of the state. The creative component in the two-tier approach is that it not only breaks this hegemony but also establishes new conditions for the development of the professional culture.

The traditional culture of teachers has largely taken the form of craft knowledge; 'know-how' encapsulated in behavioural repertoires which are transmitted as commonsense 'tips' within the professional peer group and fine-tuned in trial and error experience of numerous classroom settings. The craft knowledge embodied in the behavioural repertoires experienced teachers draw on, is largely treated as a matter of commonsense. The values, ideas, and beliefs which underpin it are not in the main objects of conscious reflection. The craft culture does not necessarily entail reflexive practice.

The growth of the educational action-research movement within the UK over the past 25 years marks a transformation from the traditional craft culture to a reflective culture in which teaching strategies are perceived as potentially problematic and therefore objects of reflective deliberation in particular contexts. Within a reflective professional culture teaching strategies are treated as provisional, context-dependent, and hypothetical. Such a culture also generates analytic frameworks which enable teachers to anticipate problems and

issues particular strategies may pose with respect to the realisation of educational aims and values.

It may well be the case that the organic development of two-tier approaches to teacher appraisal in schools is drawing on the legacy of the action-research movement, which first evolved during the '60s in the UK during a period of widespread curriculum reforms. Although action-research emerged organically in the UK as part of teachers' initiated curriculum reform (see Elliott 1988), its underlying logic and methodology was explicated and refined within the Schools Council Humanities Project under the academic direction of Lawrence Stenhouse. The subsequent growth of the educational action-research movement has been sustained, and methodologically sophisticated and systematised in the context of inservice professional development programmes designed and staffed by teacher educators in higher education establishments. The impact of such programmes on the development of the professional culture of teachers within the UK has yet to be systematically evaluated.

It is significant that the action-research movement emerged as the pace of social change rendered the traditional craft practices of teachers problematic. In other words, it is only when social change renders the commonsense wisdom of the craft culture problematic that teachers experience a need to engage in deliberative reflection about their educational values and how best to realise them in practice.

However, an additional stimulus to the development of a reflective professional culture in the late 60s and early 70s was the threat of increasing political control over educational practices in schools. The threat was manifested in early attempts to establish, through curriculum reform projects at the national level, sets of behaviourally defined learning outcomes. Stenhouse explicitly resisted accommodating the specification of behavioural objectives within the Humanities Project, and generated an oppositional 'process model' of curriculum development as the basis for the project's design (see Stenhouse 1975). This 'process model' was characterised by a specification of a teaching-learning process in terms of educational values which it was the task of teachers to reflectively realise in their practices. At the heart of the 'process model' stood the teacher as a researcher. The experience of the threat of political/administrative regulation over the practices of teachers was indeed part of the conditions which stimulated the emergence of the action-research movement in the UK over 25 years ago.

Although the emergence of counter-hegemonic two-tier appraisal schemes from 'the grassroots' may owe a great deal to the impact of the educational action-research movement on the professional culture, we must also view such schemes as indications of the further growth and development of a reflective and critical professional culture. The threat of a managerially transmitted hegemony in the form of teacher

appraisal has itself established a condition which stimulates the further growth of action-research as a central feature of the professional culture of teachers. The threat, although real, opens up creative possibilities for the transformation of teachers' professional culture. Two-tier schemes grounded in action-research illustrate such possibilities. They are not simply strategies of resistance which accommodate a degree of compromise. The resistance takes the form of a very creative compromise indeed.

Foucault (1980) has argued that:

> "There are no relations of power without resistances; the latter are all the more real and effective because they are formed right at the point where relations of power are exercised; resistance to power does not have to come from elsewhere to be real, nor is it inexorably frustrated through being the compatriot of power. It exists all the more by being in the same place as power; hence, like power, resistance is multiple and can be integrated in global strategies."

In his book Theory and Resistance in Education (1983) Giroux argues that Foucault's analysis of power relations reminds us that they are never uni-dimensional. Power expressed as domination is countered by power expressed as resistance. According to Giroux we lack an adequate account of resistance to the hegemony of the state in educational institutions, and he warns us against equating resistance with any form of oppositional behaviour. The former has a creative and productive dimension which the latter may lack. He claims that:

> "...inherent in a radical notion of resistance is an expressed hope, an element of transcendence, for radical transformation - a notion that appears to be missing from a number of radical theories of education

that appear trapped in the theoretical cemetery of Orwellian pessimism."

The theories he refers to are those based on an interpretation of Marx which implies that social practices are determined by, and reproduce, the prevailing power-relations within society. Such theories view teachers and schools as passive vehicles of social reproduction. Giroux argues that as a theoretical construct the idea of resistance points to a need to:

"Understand more thoroughly the complex ways in which people mediate and respond to the interface between their own lived experiences and structures of domination and constraint."

The study of the emergence of two-tier schemes of teacher appraisal may indeed give us a keener appreciation of how the lived experience of teachers in clasrooms and schools interacts with structures of domination enforced by the agencies of the state.

I would suggest that it is a mistake to view the professional culture of teachers and the values, ideas, and beliefs of which it consists solely as ideological structures which shape practice and legitimate its subordination to the purposes of the state. Such a view, expressed by many radical educational theorists, adopts what Block (1987) calls an anthropological theory of cognition. This theory, partly derived from

Durkheim, asserts that our everyday practices are determined by cognitive structures which are derived from history and tradition rather than experience. These historically transmitted collective representations of reality (cultures) are then defined as ideologies, or misrepresentations of reality, by incorporating Marx's explanation of certain cognitive structures as legitimating relations of domination and thereby preventing people from becoming aware of their real interests.

Block points out that anthropologists, and others who draw on their ideolological theory of cognition, have forgotten that in the German Ideology Marx discussed two types of processes in the formation of everyday practical knowledge. He argued that some aspects of cognition were the products of interaction with the environment and other people. According to Block this latter type of explanation is very similar to "the well documented conclusion of modern developmental psychologists that the child forms concepts as the result of a pre-linguistic analytic process on the basis of interactions with the environment". In other words, "a child is not taught categories or modes of reasoning but constructs them from his experience..." Block concludes that such a well-documented finding of developmental psychologists "rules out the view that cognition is an arbitrary scheme developed outside practical experience and learned ready-made from elders and betters..." Everyday practical knowledge, according to Block, is not all of a kind but the outcome of "at least two

fundamentally different processes"; namely, the transmission of misrepresentations of reality which legitimate relations of exploitation and domination, and the construction of representations on the basis of interaction with the natural and social environment. The latter is the primary process. Such processes for transmitting ideologies depend on commonsense knowledge which is developed through interaction with the natural and social environment. Ideology affirms and negates commonsense knowledge. Block argues that this is how "ideology can mystify, invert and hide the real conditions of existence". I have argued in this paper that some teacher appraisal schemes operate to transmit and sustain misrepresentations of teaching. They do this by distorting representations of teaching which emerge from the practical experience of encountering students in classrooms.

Teaching involves influencing students in a manner which enables them to learn. It is therefore experienced as an activity directed towards an end; namely, learning. But encounters with students generate conceptions of moral obligation to them in their capacity as learners. It is from such interpersonal encounters that teachers construct both the concept of learning as their end in view and the concepts of value which guide the means they employ to realising it. This experience of teaching as a moral enterprise (see Elliott 1989) is both affirmed and negated when teachers are manipulated into adopting an instrumental view of their activity. Such a view holds that the end of teaching is

learning and that it is a source of moral obligation. In this way the instrumental ideology affirms aspects of a teacher's practical experience. But it also negates that experience in viewing learning as a product of the teacher's activity rather than an enabling activity which is constituted as such by its ethical qualities. Within the framework of an ideology which separates conceptions of ends form conceptions of means, ethical obligations become displaced. They become associated with a teacher's commitment to producing quantifiable end-states in students, rather than with a commitment to realising certain qualities in his/her interactions with them as learners.

I would argue that there are limits on the extent to which educational practices can simply reproduce an instrumental ideology which legitimates the hegemony of the state. These limits are experienced in the everyday encounters that teachers have with their students, and manifest themselves as problems within those encounters. Such problems may not be consciously articulated but experienced as feelings of irritation, frustration, and anger which arise when students demonstrate an unwillingness to be treated as infinitely plastic and malleable material which can be moulded into any desired shape the system requires. These feelings may also be accompanied by feelings of guilt. For there is a sense in which the teacher 'knows' what s/he is doing; namely, transcending certain ethical limits in his/her pedagogical relation with students. This experience of dilemmas within

the pedagogical relation arises from a tension within the self-understanding of the teacher, between its ideologically structured elements and those elements which s/he has constructed on the basis of classroom experience.

The professional cultures of teachers constitute resources of knowledge they draw on for interpreting classroom situations and making decisions within them. Their practices cannot be explained solely in terms of the reproduction of ideologically structured knowledge. Professional cultures will include ideological elements, but also ways of understanding which evolve on the basis of teachers' experience of pedagogical environments. As pedagogical environments change over time these ways of understanding are continuously reconstructed. Professional cultures are not static but dynamic practical traditions continuously reconstructed by teachers on the basis of experience.

This interaction between professional cultures and practical experience often occurs below the level of conscious self-reflection. The acquisition and utilisation of professional knowledge is a largely tacit and intuitive process. It is only when teachers experience severe dilemmas which arise from conflicting elements in their self-understanding of what they are doing, that they are prompted into conscious self-reflection. The emergence of a reflective practice is both a critical and creative enterprise. It is critical because it involves a critique of the ideologically distorted components

of teachers' self-understandings in the light of their reflections upon experience. It is creative because, in attempting to resolve dilemmas in their self-understandings, teachers develop new ways of understanding the relationship between educational values and their practices. On the basis of my experience as a facilitator of educational action-research in schools and classrooms I would assert that this self-reflective process always involves teachers clarifying the nature of the dilemmas evidenced in their practices and the ambiguous self-understandings they manifest.

The emergence of action-research within a two-tier model of appraisal is a response to both an internal and external threat, and the two are not unconnected. The internal threat implicit in the experience of dilemmas is to the values which define the professional identities of teachers as educators; identities established in numerous encounters with students in classrooms. Feelings of being threatened stem from the pressure on teachers to reproduce ideological conceptions of practice which legitimate the hegemony of the state. This is why the imposition of a hierarchised appraisal scheme is experienced as a threat. Such a scheme reinforces the ideological components in teachers' practices and thereby enhances the dilemmas experienced by the 'educational self'. The connection, between the threat of formal appraisal schemes and the dilemmas teachers experience in their everyday interactions with students, explains why the former can stimulate the growth of educational action-research in

schools as a form of resistance to ideological hegemony. The growth of school-based action-research as a form of ideological resistance expressed in two-tier shcemes of appraisal, implies that the source of resistance to the hegemony of the state lies in teachers' own self-understandings of their practices; in the ambiguities and tensions implicit in them.

There is a dangerous account of action-research currently being perpetuated by certain radical theorists who have been influenced by the critical theory of Jurgen Habermas (see McCarthy 1978). Such theorists have tended to perpetuate an assumption contained in the anthropological theory of cognition; namely, that the self-understandings teachers have of their everyday practices constitute ideologically distorted misrepresentations of reality. Therefore a critique of ideology must come from understandings generated by a critical social science. It is the task of such a science to provide teachers with critical theorems which explain how their self-understandings misrepresesnt teaching and learning processes and legitimate hegemony.

Of course, all this involves a dialogue between the critical educational theorist and teachers, since a critical theory can only be validated in teachers' own self-understandings as it prompts them to reflect upon their experience of classrooms and schools. Nevertheless, action-research tends to be portrayed as a process which depends on an external source for

theory generation. Teachers' self-understandings of their practices, unassisted by a critical social science, cannot constitute the source of an ideology critique, since they are themselves products of ideological conditioning. It follows that teachers' self-understandings cannot alone serve as the basis for their emancipation from ideological control. Teachers need to be emancipated through interaction with the critical theorems of the educational scientist.

This position tends to permeate, sometimes ambiguously, what has now become a major source of action-reserach theory; namely, Carr and Kemmis' Becoming Critical: Knowing through Action-Research (1983). The dominance of the anthropological theory of cognition in this work is illustrated by the following passages in which the authors are commenting on and apparently endorsing Habermas' conception of critical theory:

> "...any reduction of the social sciences to the explication of subjective meanings ['self-understandings': my brackets] fails to recognise that the subjective meanings that characterise social life are themselves conditioned by an objective context that limits both the scope of individuals' intentions and the possibility of their realisation."

> "...emancipatory interest requires going beyond any narrow concerns with subjective meaning in order

> to acquire an emancipatory knowledge of the objective framework within which communication and social action occur. It is with this emancipatory knowledge that a critical social science is essentially concerned."

> "...if, as Habaermas concedes, self-reflection and self-understanding may be distorted by social conditions, then the rational capabilities of human beings for self-emancipation will only be realised if critical theory can elucidate these conditions and reveal how they can be eliminated."

> "The Verstehen method ['eliciting subjective understandings': my brackets] is insufficient... because it provides no critical basis for rendering the nature of social life problematic."

All of the passages appear to deny the possibility that teachers' self-understandings of their practices can alone constitute a source of critical self-reflection and emancipatory action. The authors neglect the ambiguities, conflicts and tensions contained within these self-understandings, and therefore do not seriously entertain the possibility of a self-generating, reflexive, and critical pedagogy emerging as a form of action-research. It is a possibility which renders false the distinction Carr and

Kemmis draw between a 'practical' and 'emancipatory' paradigm of action-research.

I have argued, to the contrary, that a self-generating critical pedagogy is possible as a form of creative resistance to the hegemony of the state, and that it is evidenced in the emergence of two-tier approaches to teacher appraisal. A detailed study of such approaches may well advance our understanding of how the power of the state interacts with the professional culture of teachers.

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